

Pandemic Preparedness: The Business Perspective

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May 26, 2006

Overview

- Background on pandemic influenza
- Impacts of a pandemic
- Pandemic preparedness from a Public Health perspective
- Protecting your business
- Opportunities for partnerships

Influenza 101

- Two types of influenza viruses cause illness in humans – A and B
- Different strains circulate every year due to continuous evolution
- Spread by droplets
- Approximately 36,000 people die of seasonal influenza annually

Influenza Pandemics

- Global disease outbreaks that occur when the following conditions are met:
 1. **Emergence of a new influenza A virus into the human population for which there is little or no human immunity**
 2. **Virus must infect humans and cause illness**
 3. Virus must adapt into a strain capable of spreading easily and sustainably from person to person
- H5N1 meets 2 out of the 3 conditions

Avian influenza A H5N1

- Highly contagious and lethal among poultry
- Outbreaks in Asia, Europe, Africa and Middle East
- As of May 12, 208 confirmed human cases, including 115 deaths
 - Majority of cases have resulted from direct contact with infected poultry or contaminated surfaces
 - Rare cases of human to human spread associated with close, prolonged exposure to severely ill (Thailand – 2004, Indonesia – 2006)

The next pandemic?

- No one can predict
 - Timing, nature and severity of the next pandemic
 - What the new virus may be
- Experts worldwide believe near term pandemic may be imminent
 - Widespread circulation of H5N1 viruses among avian populations and the potential for increased transmission to humans and other mammalian species

Pandemic Influenza: Planning Assumptions

- 2 or 3 waves of disease outbreak over period of a year or more
- Possibly as many as 35% of the population affected, with large numbers of deaths
- Enormous demands on the health care system
- Delays and shortages in available vaccines and antiviral drugs

Pandemic Influenza: Planning Assumptions

- Potential disruption of national and community critical infrastructure (transportation, commerce, utilities and public safety)
- Simultaneous outbreaks will limit the ability of any jurisdiction to provide mutual aid

Pandemic Influenza: Impact on Business

- Possibly up to 50% absenteeism due to illness, need to care for family, fear
- Possible temporary closures due to critical infrastructure disruption, high absenteeism and social distancing efforts
- Significant economic losses – small businesses at greater risk
- Impact of Seasonal flu
 - Employees miss an average of 1.5 days
 - Unscheduled absences costs companies approx. \$660 per worker

Local Pandemic Response Planning

- Goal is to rapidly detect and contain outbreaks, maintain essential health care and community services as best as possible
 - Public Health
 - Critical Infrastructure and Resource Management

Public Health Preparedness

- Multi-disciplinary workgroups
 - Communication and Notifications
 - Vaccine and Antiviral distribution
 - Community Disease Control and Prevention
 - Legal
 - Essential Needs
 - Surveillance, Laboratory Testing and Epidemiology
 - Surge Capacity
 - First Responders and Mass Fatality

Preparing Your Business: Public Health Perspective

- Protect your workforce
 - Educate employees about influenza and what health care precautions they need to take at home and at work
 - Encourage annual flu vaccinations
 - Maintain a sound sick leave program
 - Dissuade employees from coming to work when sick
- Communicate travel advisories and other appropriate messages openly

Preparing Your Business: Public Health Perspective

- Promote good health habits among employees that will minimize potential for transmission of infectious diseases
 - Post respiratory and hand hygiene signs
 - Expand the number of soap and sanitizer stations throughout the company
- Encourage individual and family preparedness

Preparing Your Business: Public Health Perspective

- Business continuity planning should take into account that employees are most affected during a pandemic, not infrastructure
- Begin planning now, exercise your plans and share best practices with other businesses

Protecting your business begins with you

- Stop germs from spreading
 - Wash your hands often
 - Cover your cough and sneeze
 - Stay home when sick
- Have a good home disaster preparedness plan and assist your neighbors who need help make a plan.
- Stay informed

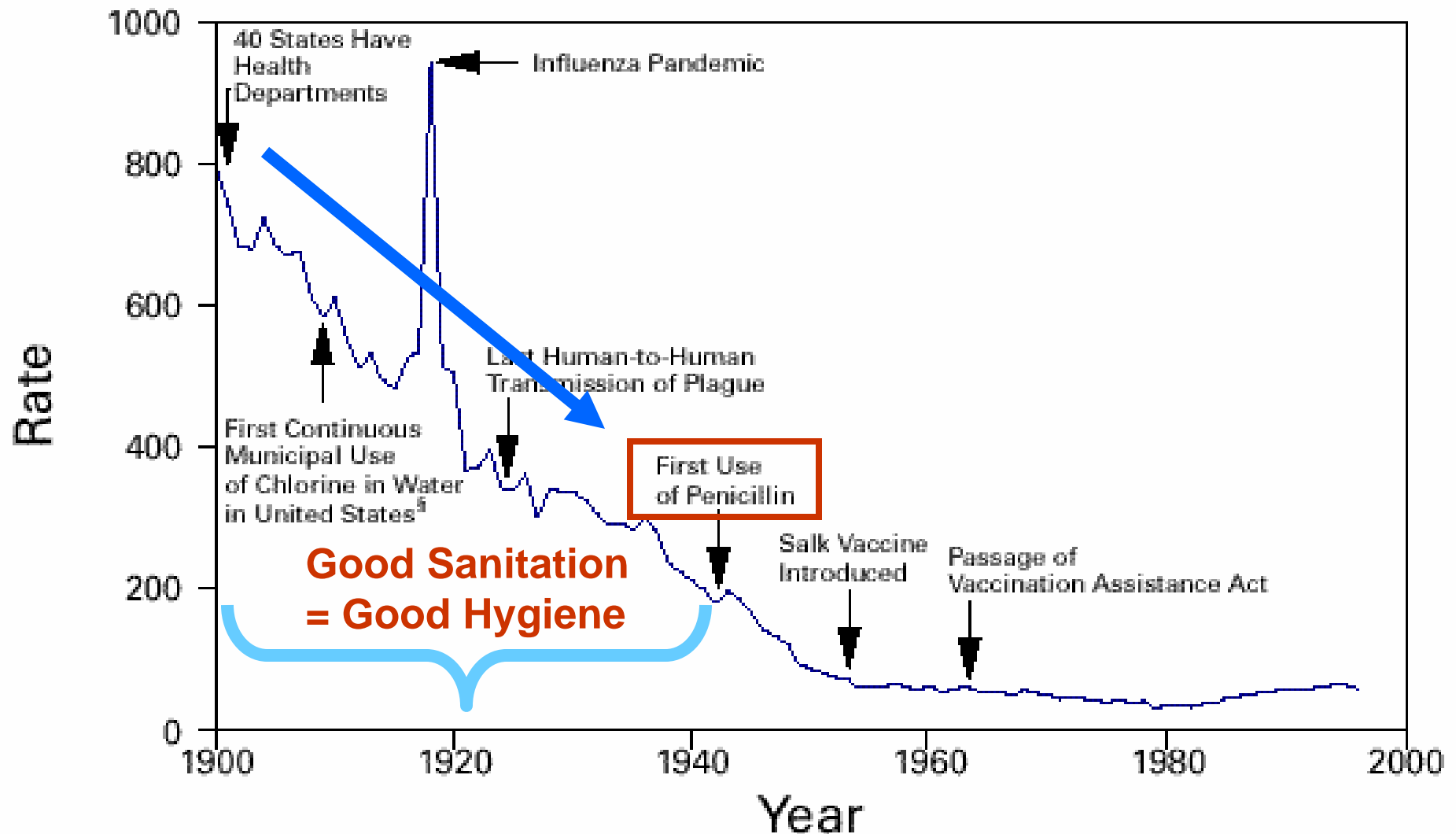
Fairfax County's Hand Washing Campaign: “Your Health is in Your Hands: WASH”



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FIGURE 1. Crude death rate* for infectious diseases — United States, 1900–1996†



*Per 100,000 population per year.

†Adapted from Armstrong GL, Conn LA, Pinner RW. Trends in infectious disease mortality in the United States during the 20th century. JAMA 1999;281:61–6.

§American Water Works Association. Water chlorination principles and practices: AWWA manual M20. Denver, Colorado: American Water Works Association, 1973.

Linking Public Health and Businesses

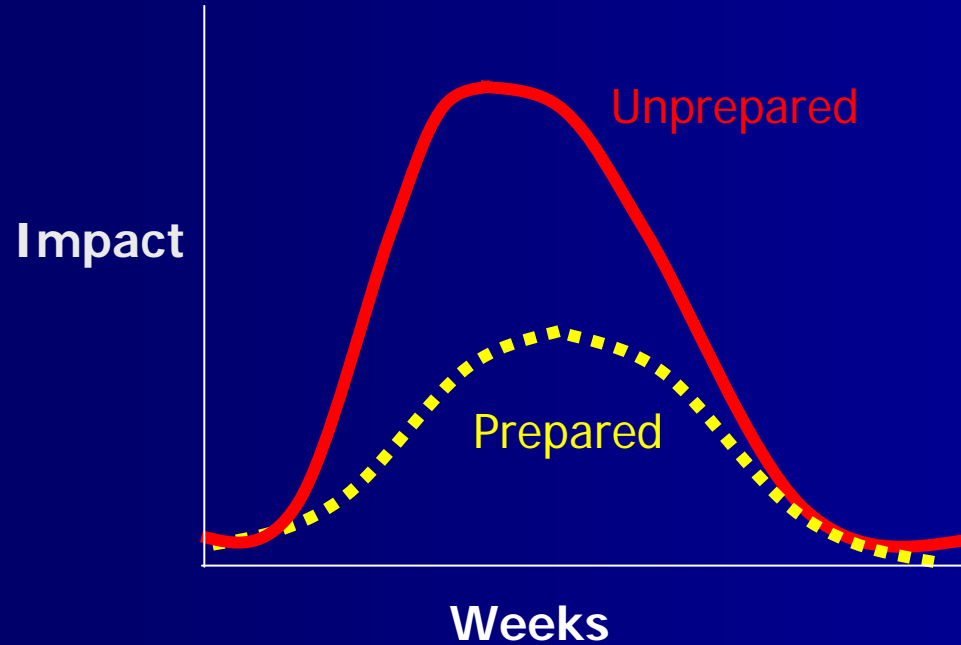
■ Surveillance

- Enhance sentinel provider network to include businesses with employee health physicians
- Letter from Health Department with details to follow

■ Communication

- Ensure updated infection control guidelines and travel advisories are being followed
- Will coordinate with Office of Public Affairs

Impact of Planning



Adapted from HHS

Internet Resources

- www.pandemicflu.gov
 - Information about pandemic flu planning categorized by subject tabs on the homepage
 - Business, Individuals and Families, Health Care Providers, etc.
- <http://www.businesscontingency.com>
 - Information about Business Contingency Preparedness

Other Internet Resources

- Business plan checklist
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic/pdf/businesschecklist.pdf>
- Letter to Business from HHS
 - http://www.cdc.gov/business/pdf/pandemic_flu_letter.pdf
- CDC Flu Prevention Tool Kit
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/toolkit/>
- Stopping the spread of germs at work CDC
 - <http://www.cdc.gov/germstopper/work.htm>
- Fairfax County Hand washing Sign
 - English:
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/hdpdf/washhands2005.pdf>
 - Spanish:
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/hdpdf/avesemanos.pdf>
- Fairfax County Flu Season Sign
 - <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/hdpdf/fluseason2005.pdf>

Thank you